



## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

# Report to the 19th District

January 1998



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Brian Hatfield**

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Dear Friends:

A wide variety of issues will be talked about in the legislative session convened in Olympia earlier this month. Thank you for reading this newsletter on topics that will take up a lot of our time and attention this year.

One of the most-covered issues in the media, of course, will be the supplemental budget. It's anticipated that our state will continue having a surplus of several hundred million dollars. Most other states would be very envious of the fact that our budget debate involves these questions:

- Should we provide more tax breaks for businesses?
- Should we store away the surplus for a rainy day?
- Should we relieve the tax strain on local governments?
- Or should we come up with a combination of these strategies?

The budget dialogue is obviously very important, but we are dedicating this newsletter to other issues we believe should be addressed for working families this year. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us whenever you have your own ideas and thoughts to share. Thank you, by the way, to everyone who responded to our November newsletter.

Sincerely,

Brian Hatfield  
State Representative  
19<sup>th</sup> District

Mark Doumit  
State Representative  
19<sup>th</sup> District

### ◆ Rural Communities:

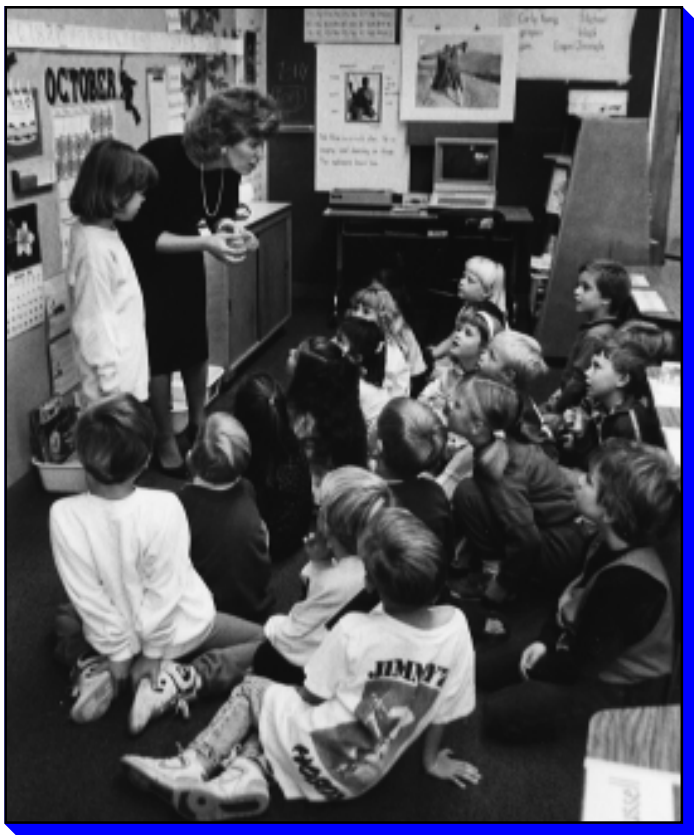
#### A fair shake isn't too much for people outside Seattle to want

Unlike the metropolitan Puget Sound area, unemployment continues at unacceptably high rates in most of our rural counties. And every day in Raymond, Cathlamet, Longview, Aberdeen and similar towns, people who do have jobs go to work wondering if their next paycheck will be their last.

We support a Washington state version of the Marshall Plan with which the United States government helped rebuild the European economy after World War II. Our state must be every bit as concerned about rural Washington today as our country was about Europe a half-century ago.

Here are some of the directions and objectives that we believe must be emphasized for the working families in our communities:

- ◆ High-quality schools, colleges, and universities should be assured.



- ◆ More of the cost for special-education programs should be paid by the state instead of being funded by local school districts.
- ◆ Restore funding for worker training and retraining.
- ◆ The government-regulatory process should be streamlined to make it less bunglesome to do business here.
- ◆ We should recognize that different parts of the state possess different realities in terms of the environment and other specific local issues.
- ◆ New businesses should be attracted, and we should cooperate with existing businesses to keep them open and help them expand.
- ◆ Energy deregulation should not be allowed to harm home owners and businesses in rural communities.
- ◆ We support enhanced 911 service.
- ◆ An appropriate system of transportation, and telephone, water, and sewer service, as well as other components of the state's infrastructure should be provided.

### ◆ Safe Drinking Water: Aberdeen infrastructure can't wait

The City of Aberdeen is in desperate need of a new water treatment plant. In part, the damage to the existing plant was caused by last year's terrible flooding. Currently, the new plant will not be on-line until the summer of 1999. That means the people being served by the water system living in Aberdeen, Cosmopolis, and outlying areas may have to contend with boiling their water during the next two winters. This is unacceptable.

We will work to speed up the completion of this infrastructure project by accelerating the necessary legislation that would allow Aberdeen to obtain bonding at a lower interest level and purchase the purification equipment up to a year earlier than planned.

# 19th District News

## ◆ **Alternative Rail Corridor: Port Economic Development**

We are supporting state-funded assistance for the Alternative Rail Corridor project for the Port of Longview industrial area. Transportation problems are hindering growth for existing Longview businesses and discouraging new development at the International Paper and Mint Farm Industrial Park sites.

We need to increase rail capacity so that Longview can successfully compete with other ports and regions in Washington and Oregon. The proposed Alternative Rail Corridor would:

- ◆ Improve truck access to the industrial area.
- ◆ Reduce traffic congestion for industrial workers and other residents of the area.
- ◆ Meet the rail needs of the grain-export facility proposed at the port by the Archer Daniels Midland Company.
- ◆ Attract new industries and strengthen those industries already in the region.

## ◆ **Salmon Restoration: An important objective in recovering fish runs is avoiding a federal takeover.**

Our special newsletter a couple of months ago discussed the once-huge Pacific Northwest fish runs that have plunged to unacceptably low levels. With salmon and other runs in danger of extinction, the courts or the federal government could override our authority to manage our own state resources.

As a member of the Salmon Recovery Task Force, Mark has been very involved in helping write a Democratic plan for fish recovery. As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, Brian will be among the handful of lawmakers who get a crack at debating the recovery legislation. We remain optimistic about convincing other legislators to embrace our position. To our way of thinking, our fish recovery goal can only be met if we:



- ◆ Restore salmon to healthy, sustainable populations. We must support productive commercial and recreational fisheries so that working families have a fair chance at a good life.
- ◆ Emphasize locally developed recovery efforts. We must bolster the salmon-restoration work already being done by conservation and fish-enhancement groups, as well as many farmers, timber companies, and local governments.
- ◆ Guarantee healthy watersheds. We must protect the watersheds that are productive and restore the ones that have been damaged.
- ◆ Advocate volunteer efforts. We must encourage property owners and non-governmental organizations to conduct restoration and recovery efforts on their own.
- ◆ Identify and remove the thousands of culverts and other barriers to fish passage, assuring that our rivers and streams are more fish-friendly. Last year, we co-sponsored House Bill 2217 directing that as many of these barriers as possible be removed. We will continue working on that idea this year.
- ◆ Address the issue of predator control with respect to birds and mammals (such as seals)

## Representative Brian Hatfield • Representative Mark Doumit

that are taking tons of fish. We must get some relief from federal laws that protect these predators at the expense of the fish.

- ◆ Take a look at ocean problems, including offshore foreign-fishing fleets that are not regulated. We must get a better handle on what's going on in terms of the international harvest in waters off our coast.

We recognize that this is a weighty agenda for this short, 60-day legislative session. Many other important items must be addressed as well, but we will continue to emphasize the subjects discussed here throughout the next two months. Thank you again for your input.



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**19th District**

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